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[Title Page]

Letter to the Editor

Greek Kinship Terms in Everyday Use

Sir:

As a graduate student in anthropology and a person of Greek descent, I would like to correct the inaccuracy, both as to words used and their modern forms, of the Modern Greek kinship terms in Edmonson's "Kinship Terms and Kinship Concepts" (AA 59:393–433). The inaccuracy does not affect the thesis or conclusions of the paper, nor is it the fault of the author but rather of the vexed language problem of Greece. The terms given by Edmonson are not the everyday terms of the Modern Greek spoken language (*demotike*), but the revived Ancient Greek (more or less) terms of the artificially created literary language (*katharevousa*). Indeed, Pernot found it necessary to treat the two as separate languages in his *Grammaire du Grec Moderne*.

This is not the place to go into the bitter language controversy; suffice it to say that any dictionary written by a Greek is to a greater or lesser degree an unreliable index to what is actually said by the people. Edmonson's procedure of checking his Greek dictionary data with a native speaker was of course correct but unfortunately to no avail, as most Greeks of any sophistication will feel called upon to give the "right" or dictionary word if asked, especially to a professor. However, this is not to say that the *katharevousa* terms are never used in speech, but their frequency is low and the number of speakers is limited.

Since the actual kinship terminology of Modern Greek has, to my knowledge, not yet been published, I am submitting the kin terms used by my relatives and compatriots in America and in Laconia in the hope that they may be made available for use by interested researchers. (The system of transliteration is roughly that of Kahane and Ward.)

Modern Greek Kinship Terminology

father	patéras, babás
mother	mitéra, mamá, mána
parents	ghonís
brother	adherfós
sister	adherfí
siblings	adhérfia (n. pl.)
son	yos
daughter	kóri
child	pedhí (n.)
parent's father	papús
parent's mother	yáya
parent's parent's father	prospápu
parent's parent's mother	prósyaya
child's son	ángonas
child's daughter	angóna

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Collateral consanguineal relatives of ascending generations and their spouses: thíos, thía (uncle, aunt); bárbas (uncle, a familiar term.). 601

Collateral consanguineal relatives of descending generations and their spouses: anepsyós, anepsyá (newphew, niece).

Collateral consanguineal relatives of the same generation and their spouses: (e)xádherfos, (e)xadhérfi (cousin); protoxádherfos (first cousin); xadhérfia (cousinhood, cousinry).

The older collateral relative is presumed to be of an ascending generation, but the technicality can be insisted upon for precision or humor (as when a woman inisted on several occasions that her three-year-old daughter was my aunt). Then, too, fully descriptive phrases can be used in reference, e.g., my uncle, the first cousin of my father. [522]

Member of a family related by marriage: simpétheros, simpethéra (co-father-in-law, co-mother-in-law)

father of spouse	pentherós
mother of spouse	pentherá
brother of spouse	kunyádhos
sister of spouse	kunyádha

For other relatives of spouse, the same terms as spouse uses.

wife of son	nífi (bride)
wife of brother	nífi
husband of sister	ghambrós (groom)
husband of daughter	ghambrós
wife	yinéka (woman), kiría (Mrs.)
husband	ándras(man), kírios (Mr.)
spouse	sízighos
husband of wife's sister	batzanákis
wife of husband's brother	sinifádha (co-bride)
godfather	nonós
godmother	noná
godson	vaftistikós
goddaughter	vaftistiká

Members of families related by godparenthood: kumbáros, kumbára. [608]

wedding sponsor and spouse	kumbáros, kumbára

Members of families related by wedding-sponsorship: kumbáros, -a.

When a woman marries she customarily takes not only her husband's last name but his first as well, plus a suffix, -ena or -u, depending on the number of syllables and the accentuation of the name; e.g., Dhimítrios-Dhimítrena, Dhiamandís-Dhiamandú. This is not grammatical gender; the suffix means "wife of," and can be added even to nicknames. The given name is still used by the family of procreation and others. The suffix -ítsa added to a woman's maiden name indicates née so-and-so. Family names can form the plural of their respective declensions or add the suffix -éi (ancient *aioi*, "natives of"), 193 551 [553]

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193 551 indicating the members and partisans of a family or clan; e.g., Tsavaléi, Andromidhéi, Kolokotronéi, Petimezéi (Cf. Pernot, vol. I, p. 86).

177 601 Of the Modern Greek kinship terms listed above, most existed with the same or much the same meaning in Ancient Greek. However, the latter had a much richer and more varied vocabulary in the totality of its literature, and the reduction has been considerable. It included many non-Indo-European loan words of which *theîos* and *anepsiós*, among others, survive today. The modern loan words are kunyádhos, bárbas, yáya, and batzanákis, from Romance, Turkish, etc. The bulk of borrowings and replacements of common Indo-European kin terms had occurred already in ancient times. For instance, *adelphós*, *-é* (modern *adherfós*), literally "co-uterine" (from *delphýs*, womb, a word of uncertain origin), became the sibling terms in place of **phrâter* and [113] **eór* which dropped out before Homer. The full roster of classic and Homeric kin terms can be found in Miller's "Greek Kinship Terminology."

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